DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 698 IR 057 263

AUTHOR	LaPoint, Virginia A.
TITLE	Electronic Resources in Ohio Prison Libraries.
PUB DATE	1997-07-00
NOTE	44p.; Master's Research Paper, Kent State University.
PUB TYPE	Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Access to Information; Information Technology; Internet; *Library Automation; Library Collection Development; Library Funding; Library Materials; Library Networks; Library Research; *Library Role; *Library Services; Library Standards; Library Surveys; Modems; Online Catalogs; Optical Data Disks; *Prison Libraries; Questionnaires; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS	Barriers to Implementation; *Electronic Resources; Library History; Ohio

ABSTRACT

Traditionally, libraries have had a role of providing equitable access for those who might not otherwise have access, and this role continues today in implementing access to electronic resources. However, there are special problems in applying this mission to prison libraries. A short history of automation in prison libraries is followed by a description of the current environment that prison libraries operate in, along with a notation of current standards and the current lack of research in this area. A survey questionnaire was sent to librarians of the 29 state prison libraries currently operating in Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. Twenty-two responded to the survey, for a response rate of 76%. This research paper analyzes and describes a variety of data regarding institution capacity, OPACs (online public access catalogs), CD-ROMs, modems, Internet access, cooperative networks and interlibrary loan activity, periodicals, and perceptions about electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries. The data indicate that most prison librarians think the addition of electronic resources can save space, save costs, and provide better access to information. Some of the benefits of implementation are described, and suggestions are made to address the problems hindering implementation. The cover letter, questionnaire, and data tables are appended. (Author/DLS)

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ED 426 698

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN OHIO PRISON LIBRARIES

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the Kent State University
School of Library and Information Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Virginia A. LaPoint

July, 1997

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Master's Research Paper by

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, libraries have had a role of providing equitable access for those who might not otherwise have access, and this role continues today in implementing access to electronic resources. But there are special problems in applying this mission to prison libraries. A short history of automation in prison libraries is followed by a description of the current environment that prison libraries operate in, along with a notation of current standards and the current lack of research in this area. A survey questionnaire was sent to librarians of the twenty-nine state prison libraries currently operating in Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. Twenty-two responded to the survey, with a response rate of 76%. This research paper analyzes and describes a variety of data regarding institution capacity, OPACs, CD-ROMs, modems, internet access, cooperative networks and interlibrary loan activity, periodicals, and perceptions about electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries. The data indicates most prison librarians think the addition of electronic resources can save space, save costs, and provide better access to information. Some of the benefits of implementation are described, and suggestions are made to address the problems hindering implementation.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES iv

INTRODUCTION 1

LITERATURE REVIEW 2

A. History 2

1. Automation in Ohio prison libraries 3

2. Automation in other states 5

B. Types of electronic resources 6

C. Current environment 6

D. Standards 7

E. Lack of literature 9

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES 9

A. Stated objectives 9

B. Definitions 10

METHODOLOGY 11

A. Introduction and sample 11

B. Data collection instrument 11

C. Procedures and design 12

ANALYSIS OF DATA 13

A. Institution capacity 13

B. Electronic resources: current status 14

1. OPACs 14

2. CD-ROMs 15

3. Modems and Internet access 17

C. Cooperative networks and Interlibrary loan activity 18

D. Periodicals 19

E. Perceptions about electronic resources in prison libraries 20

CONCLUSIONS 21

APPENDIX

A. Cover letter 24

B. Survey questionnaire 25

C. Tables 29

REFERENCE LIST 36

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Institution capacity and ILL activity	29
2.	OPACs	30
3.	CD-ROMs	31
4.	Modems and Internet access	32
5.	Cooperative networks and interlibrary loan activity	33
6.	Periodicals	34
7.	Perceptions about electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries	35

INTRODUCTION

Prison library services have changed since the implementation of the Walnut Street Jail library in Philadelphia in 1790. That collection was limited to books of a religious nature only and for the specific purpose of inducing moral change among the inmates. Although prison library collections have become more inclusive in scope since that time, there is still much work to be done in the area of prison librarianship. In 1997, most public and academic libraries in Ohio have Internet access and numerous electronic resources such as CD-ROM stations and/or on-line access to a variety of databases. Especially with the advent of OPLIN and OHIOLINK in Ohio, these resources are available even to small libraries, who in the past were unable to take advantage of current technology. This "connectedness" to resources is becoming more and more a standard for providing services to patrons in libraries. Traditionally, libraries have had a role of providing equitable access for those who might not otherwise have access, and this role continues today in implementing access to electronic resources; it is just a different format from traditional print sources. The mission is the same.

However, there are special problems in applying this mission to prison libraries. The mission of corrections professionals and the mission of librarians are sometimes difficult to reconcile when it comes to electronic resources, for there are special issues of security to be dealt with. But this author holds the view that it is possible for the two professions to find acceptable solutions which can be implemented that benefit both the population served by the library and also be of benefit to the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

LITRATURE REVIEW

History

In 1967, the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) made funds available to the institutionalized through state library agencies. These grants were of benefit to Ohio prison libraries as a source of funding projects that otherwise might not have been implemented. The *Bounds v. Smith* (1977) Supreme court decision required prison systems nationwide to provide meaningful access to the courts. Complying with this mandate is expensive for correctional agencies; they must either provide law book libraries (this course was chosen by most states) or provide access to the court through persons trained in the law. This mandate typically directed funds away from prison library general collections in order to meet the mandate for law library collections (Vogel, 1995). Ohio provides law book libraries staffed by inmate clerks who are trained in legal matters.

Funding for prison libraries in Ohio comes from several sources. Funding for prison librarians' salaries and the prison law library collections comes from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) General Revenue Fund. Purchases for the libraries' general collection development come from "Industrial and Entertainment"(I & E) funds at each institution. I & E funds consist of monies generated when inmates purchase goods at the commissary, and from vending machine commissions, donations, and other projects. Since the major portion of these monies are generated by inmates themselves, the funds are to be used for expenditures which benefit the inmates of the institution. The resulting funds are shared by the recreation department,

the chapel, and the library. The prison library typically uses these I & E funds to purchase books, magazines and newspapers, library supplies, and additional law library materials which are not on the required list. One additional source already mentioned, is Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) federal grants administered by the Department of Education. The last of these funds are being dispersed. The program will be replaced by the new Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) federal grants, and will be administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a smaller entity. This will likely mean closer scrutiny of grant applications, and stiffer competition for grants. Additionally, there will more evaluation of projects after their implementation in order to increase accountability. The LSTA grants have two priorities: "information access through technology and information empowerment through special services" (*ALA Washington News*, Oct. 16, 1996), with an emphasis on public libraries and disadvantaged populations. LSTA grants require one third matching funds from nonfederal, state, or local sources such as form the library's budget, donations, or fundraising projects. The application process and disbursement of grant funds is coordinated through the State Library of Ohio. Credit goes to prison librarians who find the time and energy to pursue grants in an effort to improve library services to prisoners. Most Ohio prison libraries are staffed by one professional librarian and perhaps a library assistant.

Automation in Ohio Prison Libraries

In 1983 an ad hoc committee of three Ohio prison librarians formed to examine the feasibility of automating Ohio's prison libraries. They reviewed the DataTrek program and an LSCA grant was developed to pilot the system in three institutions: Southeastern Correctional Institution

(SCI), Hocking Correctional Institution (HCI), and Southern Ohio Correctional Facility (SOCF). The committee had the support of the State Library of Ohio, but the ODRC Central Office felt there should be only one institution involved, and did not support the program. By 1984 the program had died and the three librarians had left the department. (Sawyer, 1989)

The first mention in the literature of the actual implementation of an automated collection and circulation system was in the Chillicothe Correctional Institute in Chillicothe, Ohio in 1987. This was achieved with an LSCA grant, using Data Trek software cataloging and circulation modules. Passwords protected unauthorized users from gaining entry, processing of overdue notices was faster, and users were able to retrieve and get books sooner. One additional benefit that should be noted is the gaining of re-entry skills, which will be important upon release of the inmate into society. This is evident in the comment of one of the inmate library workers. He stated that he "has learned a new trade, since he was unfamiliar with computers before he came to work in the library" (Sawyer, 1987).

In 1993 there was a survey done of the twenty one Ohio prison libraries in operation at the time (Liggett, 1993). Of the twenty one, twelve responded. Of these twelve prison libraries who responded, 45.5 % indicated that they had computers, and 72.7% indicated that they were either automated or in the process of being automated. 90.1% of the twelve indicated that they participated in Interlibrary Loan. Considering that these percentages apply only to the twelve libraries responding to the survey, the percentages may not apply statewide because figures for the remaining nine libraries were unknown. There was no other data regarding electronic resources in this study.

Automation in Other States

A landmark event occurred in 1990 in New York when the Westchester County Library System (a network of 38 public libraries) installed a terminal at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility Library. This allowed inmates greater access to the holdings of the 38 WESTLYNX member libraries, and helped with book cataloging (WESTLYNX, 1990). A couple of years later they installed a CD-ROM computerized catalog system, and found that it was user friendly and not prone to breakdowns (Buckvar, 1993).

Besides developments in the state of Maryland, the above reference to Westchester County in the state of New York is the only mention this author found regarding efforts of networking prison libraries to other library catalogs. This type of access could be of benefit, especially in prison libraries, which typically have a high rate of interlibrary loan activity. Interlibrary loan plays an important role in providing access to materials that are not available in the limited collections of prison libraries.

The developments in the state of Maryland place that state a step ahead of the rest of the nation. . In 1977, 47 states chose to meet the mandate of *Bounds v. Smith* with law library book collections, which seemed the most affordable choice at the time. Maryland responded differently. The prison libraries are networked with each other and with other kinds of libraries in the state. They have a program called Library Assistance to State Institutions (LASI). This library network information source can be accessed by a librarian anywhere in the state. The LASI program is headquartered in the Correctional Education Libraries location in Baltimore. This location has a subscription to an online legal database, and provides document delivery. From this central location, inmates all over the state can make requests through their librarians. This system

eliminates the costly investment in expensive law book collections and replacement of missing titles. Maryland is able to provide a more creative and cost effective alternative for meeting the *Bounds v. Smith* mandate. Next Maryland wants to save more money and time by using e-mail and electronic bulletin boards instead of paper for requesting cases.(Vogel, 1996)

Types of Electronic Resources

Based on information in Vibecke Lehmann's 1995 essay on automation, computer technology can be implemented in prison libraries in the following ways:

1) an *OPAC* - an integrated library system with cataloging and circulation modules; note that some systems also have acquisitions and serials control
2) a *modem* and related software can promote better networking, for example, the processing of interlibrary loan, access to other library catalogs, and expanded references sources through Internet access.
3) *CD-ROM products* at stand alone workstations or on a local area network (LAN); this can provide reference information and self-directed learning in support of education programs

Current Environment

To attain an understanding of the current environment in which prison libraries operate, several elements of this environment need to be described. The first is the intended purpose of prison libraries. First it must be understood that corrections professionals and library professionals bring to their stated purpose two different world views. Traditionally, the library professional

encourages the public library model endorsing the "right to read" philosophy which is at the heart of public library ethics and evidenced in the Library Bill of Rights. The mission of the Ohio DRC is that "the Ohio DRC protects Ohio citizens by ensuring effective supervision of adult offenders in environments that are safe, humane, and appropriately secure The Department seeks to instill in offenders an improved sense of responsibility and the ability to become productive citizens"(Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 1996). This demonstrates the primary purpose of security, and the secondary rehabilitative role of the corrections professional. Robert Coyle in his book "Libraries in prisons: a blending of institutions" (1987) criticized the public library model and tried to blend the roles of the two professions in theory. He said that value of prison libraries lies not in their recreational use but in their rehabilitative capacity (Coyle, 1989). Coyle incurred criticism from library professionals for his views of a change-based model (Rubin, 1989).

The organizational chart of the Ohio DRC indicates that prison libraries in each institution in Ohio are under the direction of the Education Department, which is under the direction of Special Services, which is under the Warden of each institution. In Ohio, the State Library acts in a consultant capacity to the twenty-nine state correctional institution libraries.

Standards

The American Correctional Association (ACA) published "Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions"(ACA, 1990). This document contains the most recent information for standards outlined by the ACA.

Another standard for prison libraries is "Library standards for adult correctional institutions, 1992", published by the American Library Association. To date it has not been endorsed by the ACA. In its section on philosophy, it states that the library services in prisons shall include the same variety of material, formats, and programs available to the outside community, but also that the librarian shall recognize that the library is part of an agency with security priorities. Under the section on access, the document states that "library materials shall reflect the formats and technologies generally available, including, but not limited to ... computer software, and that libraries shall participate in library systems, resource sharing networks, consortia, or other cooperative relationships"(ALA, 1992). Further, it describes computer software as including "word processing, current business usage, academic learning, and graphics programs" (ALA, 1992, p. 24).

Appendix F of the same document includes a 1990 national prison library survey which reveals many interesting statistics on staffing, collections, and facilities, and services. Results indicate that generally institutions fall under recommended standards set by ALA. The survey did not include any questions about electronic resources.

Lehmann's essay on automation in prison libraries indicates that there is growing interest in electronic resources among prison librarians, but that some obstacles are lack of funds and central coordination. An additional comment was that the implementation of CDROM computer use has frequently preceded the bigger step to an integrated system, but that in most states, it is still difficult to convince prison administration (Lehmann, 1995)

Lack of Literature

Brenda Vogel, Coordinator of Correctional Education Libraries in Maryland, in 1989 made the following statement regarding library service to prisoners: that "since 1977, only 4.5 articles have appeared each year, and only 2 books on the subject have been published"(Vogel, 1989). Since that time, Brenda Vogel has written four articles and one book on the subject. Her writing is the most current on the topic of electronic resources in prison libraries. Besides Vogel's book, there is one other; a compilation of essays edited by Rubin and Suvak. Both books were published in 1995, and both address current issues and are good practical handbooks for prison librarians, who prior to this, had little resource for this type of information. Other than some research papers by library school graduate students (Liggett, 1993; Mason, 1996; McCollister, 1995; Ostrolenk, 1995) and a few national surveys which are now outdated, there is little research being done in this field of prison librarianship which is ignored by most of the library profession. The information that is available indicates a population served that is extremely diverse in cultural background and reading level. This population is increasing rapidly, evidenced by the current overcrowding of prisons.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of this research paper is to describe the current status of electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries, determine possible alternatives and benefits of implementation, and explore the environmental factors influencing their implementation.

This paper will attempt to describe what kind of electronic resources are currently available in Ohio prison libraries. And of those who have electronic resources, an effort will be made to

determine what kind of issues arise, and what kind of obstacles or problems there are with implementation. Possible solutions and benefits to implementation will also be sought out and addressed (Benefits to the inmates and to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction)

Definitions

Electronic resources are defined as computer hardware and software that include:

Integrated library system = an OPAC (on-line public access catalog) module and a circulation module.

CDROM technology = a stand alone workstation or several workstations on a local area network with CDROM drives and CDROM software programs such as word processing, encyclopedias, and other reference materials.

Modem = a device which, along with communications software, enables the library to access on-line information (other library catalogs or online services or the Internet).

An *Ohio prison library* is defined as a correctional institution for offenders sentenced to imprisonment that is operated by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections.

This study is limited to the 29 correctional institutions located in the state of Ohio that are operated by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Results may not be generalizable to prison libraries that are operated by county or city organizations such as city or county jails within the state of Ohio, nor to prison libraries in other states.

The significance of this study is that, by gaining an understanding the current status of electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries, the information provided may assist in planning for the future. The first step in planning is to describe the current status and identify possible

alternatives. An environmental scan of the climate that prison libraries function within must also be considered. This study will help to identify some of these factors as a first step in providing prison administration and library professionals with information and understanding regarding the implementation of electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Sample

To determine current status and issues regarding the use of electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries, a survey design method was used that is descriptive and qualitative in nature. The sample in this descriptive case study is defined as libraries in the twenty-nine prisons located in the state of Ohio which are operated by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. It does not include city, nor county jails. The sample includes the total population of Ohio state prison libraries, and is a purposive, non-probability sample.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument used was in the form of a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), which was distributed by mail to the librarian at each of the twenty-nine Ohio prison libraries in operation at the time of this study. The survey questionnaire contains questions that are mostly structured, with a few unstructured questions to allow open-ended responses. The instrument used for the survey was developed by the author, and the content areas addressed by it are:

- types of electronic resources currently in use in Ohio prison libraries.
- what is seen as problematic in implementing electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries.
- possible advantages to implementing electronic resources.
- benefits to the population served.
- benefits to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

In order to minimize bias and error, questions were designed to be as objective as possible and avoid any subtle suggestion that might sway the subject's response due to the wording of the question.

Procedures and Design

One of the strengths of using a survey design with a purposive sample in this descriptive, qualitative study is the knowledge base of the sample being surveyed (librarians). It was determined that a purposive non-probability sample would best describe the current status because they work in prison libraries on a daily basis, and being immersed in the environment, would have good insight regarding the problem being studied.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter (Appendix A) which included the title and purpose of the study, an assurance of confidentiality, statement of risk involved, statement regarding non-participation, and persons to contact for additional information.

Efforts were made to reduce non-response bias by:

- specifying a date for returning the questionnaire.
- Including a self addressed stamped envelope.
- Sending a thank you/follow up card to all subjects as a reminder.
- Assuring that responses would be confidential.
- Stating that the information gathered in the survey could be useful in planning improvements in Ohio prison library services.

The study has the strength of gaining information from a group of persons (prison librarians) who are knowledgeable about the topic under study (prison libraries).

DATA ANALYSIS

Structured questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics presented in table form. Responses to open-ended questions were analyzed using content analysis techniques to ascertain any consistent patterns in the data.

Of the twenty-nine institution librarians, twenty-two responded to the survey, resulting in a response rate of 76%. One respondent declined to fill out the survey, but stated that the library had no electronic resources of any kind. The reader should keep in mind that this response was excluded from the statistics because there was no questionnaire returned. Descriptive statistics are based on the remaining twenty-one responses.

Institution capacity

Regarding institution capacity, results were as expected and support the statement that prisons are overcrowded. Twenty of the Ohio correctional institutions responding hold an average of

170 % of the number of inmates they were originally intended to house, with a range from 85% to 293%, and a mode of 173% (see Appendix C, Table 1). Considering that the physical space of the institution library was also built to serve a specific number of inmates, it is not surprising that librarians are complaining of a lack of sufficient space for their collections and their patrons. Physical space being at such a premium, it seems that electronic resources like CD-ROMs are an effective means of saving both space and costs. For example, consider an encyclopedia on CD-ROM. Space is saved when an entire encyclopedia, which takes considerable shelf space in the print format, is contained on a single CD-ROM. The price of the software is minimal compared to the print format. In addition, the need for capital expenditures to expand the physical space of the library is reduced.

Current Status of Electronic Resources in Ohio Prison Libraries

OPACs

The present survey results show that 57 % (twelve of the twenty-one respondents) currently have an OPAC in use (see Appendix C, Table 2). In the 1993 survey by Liggett, 72.9% (nine of the twelve respondents) had indicated they were either automated or in the process of doing so. Although the number of libraries who have OPACs has increased by two in the present survey, looking at the fact that there are now twenty-nine libraries in operation instead of twenty illustrates the perspective that there appears to be a decrease in the percentage of Ohio prison libraries who have OPACs.

All of the respondents who have OPACs have both a circulation module and a cataloging module. Most do not have acquisitions or serials modules. Data Trek software is used by 82% of the respondents who have OPACs, which is significant when considering the possibility of networking the Ohio prison libraries; although networking library catalogs takes immense planning, it could be a positive first step in the right direction to have consistent software in each of the twenty-nine libraries. It is promising that a large percentage of the respondents are already using the same software, even though not all the libraries are using the most current version.

Of the twelve respondents who have an OPAC, two still have a card catalog in use as well. Of the nine respondents who have no OPAC, seven have a card catalog in use, and two have neither an OPAC or a card catalog. Inmates are permitted to use the OPAC in every library that has one.

This data presents evidence of a wide range in the level of automation in Ohio prison libraries. The responding libraries range from having the most current 7.1 version of DataTrek , to having neither an OPAC or a card catalog in use.

CD-ROMs

CD-ROM workstations are in use by 52% of the respondents (eleven of the twenty-one libraries), and one who responded no to the question indicated that the library would be implementing them soon. (see Appendix C, Table 3) Inmate use is permitted by all but one library. Of the eleven respondents who have CD-ROM workstations, 55% have printers attached.

Regarding the kinds of CD-ROMS used in the responding libraries, 80% indicate they use encylopedias, 60% use dictionaries, 50% use educational software, 30% use word processing

programs, 30% use databases with abstracts or full text of magazine articles, and 20% use games, *Books in Print*, and college information. Legal databases are used in none of the responding libraries. *Books in Print* is used by inmates in prison libraries to search for citations to request books through Interlibrary Loan. This enables them to have access to books which are not in the local prison library collection, if the library is fortunate enough to have a cooperative agreement with other libraries in the region. It is not surprising that no libraries have legal databases on CD-ROM, since in Ohio, most if not all prison libraries meet court mandates with law books in print format, and occasionally on microfiche. In a recent survey of Ohio prison law libraries (Mason, 1996), the author notes that among Ohio prison law libraries, lack of space and lack of automation are a similarity that they share . She recommends including CD-ROM equipment for the law library because it could provide easy access to massive amounts of legal materials. This may be true, however, it is not likely that corrections management will find that enabling inmates to search for legal materials faster with CD-ROM technology to be an advantageous situation. It is more likely that they will be satisfied to comply with court mandates by continuing to provide law books in print format. Mason's notation of saving space, on the other hand, could be a more convincing factor for general CD-ROM software in the eyes of corrections management, given the present overcrowding and limitations of physical space in the current facilities.

Data regarding what these CD-ROM workstations are used for indicates that usage is mostly for reference (90%) and to support institution education programs (60%). Thirty percent use them to get information for interlibrary loan. Other uses are self-directed learning (20%), re-entry skills (10%) and word processing (10%). Only one library indicates usage to play games. This

data supports the assumption that CD-ROM technology is being used in prison libraries to support institutional educational programs, and assist inmates in acquiring new skills for re-entry into society.

These advantages to CD-ROMs were cited by the respondents who have them: 70% cited that saving space is an advantage, and 60% indicated that CD-ROMs incurred less damage than other formats, and 40% indicated cost to be an advantage. Several open-ended responses cited speed of retrieval and decrease in theft of print resources to be positive results of CD-ROM usage.

Damage to hardware and software was cited by 30% as a disadvantage to CD-ROMs. Disadvantages noted in open-ended responses were: technical problems, reticence of business office, and, the level of training and staff supervision required.

Modems and Internet Access

Only one of the twenty-one respondents has a modem in the library (see Appendix C, Table 4). This library addresses security by locking it up when not in use, and uses the modem to access other library catalogs. Of the twenty-one respondents, 86% have a workspace in the library which can be locked. A majority of the respondents (86%) think it would be beneficial for the librarian to have internet access. The issue of security surrounding the use of modems can be addressed by using external modems which can be locked up when not in use, or permitting the librarian to use it only when there are no inmates in the library, such as during "count time" (periodic intervals each day when the inmates are required to return to their cells for the purpose of being counted).

Access to more information through an internet connection can be of benefit to employee staff. Brenda Vogel elaborates on the benefits to employee staff in her article "Ready or Not, Computers are Here" (Vogel, 1995). Electronic resources can enable the librarian to research online information sources outside the library, providing statistics and reports, and other data that can be helpful in planning and decision making. In addition, access to pertinent facility documents, such as administrative regulations and institution policies, in an environment where the institution is networked statewide, enhances the effectiveness of the institution and its' employees (Vogel, 1995).

Cooperative networks and interlibrary loan activity

Ninety-five percent of the respondents participate in interlibrary loan (ILL), but only 33% of the respondents are members of a cooperative library network (see Appendix C, Table 5). The interlibrary loan activity has a range of 0 to 1000 requests processed per month, with a mean of 64 and a mode of only 20. The one library that does not participate in interlibrary loan indicated that they get requests for it every month, and are trying to implement it, but are finding resistance from management.

The data indicates that interlibrary loan is an important service in prison libraries. It should be noted that although almost all the libraries participate in interlibrary loan, the level of ILL activity varies widely. Increased participation in cooperative networks can increase library services in a cost effective way by providing access to more books without increasing costs for book purchases. However, some cooperative networks may be hesitant to allow participation of prison libraries due to a "net borrower" effect. This is another situation where a cooperative network

among the prison libraries in Ohio would benefit the member libraries through the sharing of their resources.

The paper or post mail method is used to process ILL requests by the majority of respondents, with a few using the fax method. If prison librarians had internet access, interlibrary loan services could be enhanced by the ability to search library catalogs, take advantage of technology being used in cooperative library networks, and through use of email to process requests, saving time and the cost of the post mail method.

Periodicals

Seventy-six percent of the respondents do not keep back issues of newspapers or magazines (see Appendix C, Table 6). The most frequently cited reason was no storage space. Other reasons cited were that back issues go to special populations, that is, to special populations on the compound, such as segregation, literacy units, residential treatment units, or cadre. A couple of responses indicated that pilferage or poor condition of the materials was a reason. Only 19% of the respondents had any other source for back issues of newspapers or magazines. Those who did had either Newbank, Infotrac, or Proquest.

It is likely that students searching for information on current events have a difficult time finding materials in this environment. Again, CD-ROM technology can alleviate the problem of storage space for back issues through the use of abstract or full text databases, and eliminate pilferage and poor condition of materials which are a problem with print formats. However, these particular databases on CD-ROM are still quite expensive, and probably out of reach for most prison libraries at this time.

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN OHIO PRISON LIBRARIES

When asked if they ever have difficulty answering reference questions due to lack of resources in the current collection, 81% responded yes (see Appendix C, Table 7). Eighty-one percent also indicate that employee staff use the library. This data indicates that improvements in access to information resources through the use of electronic resources would benefit inmate patrons and employee staff alike.

Ninety-five percent of the respondents feel that security issues can be addressed in a way that maintains security, and still allow for the use of electronic resources in prison libraries.

In answer to the questions referring to the need for more information about the benefits of electronic resources in prison libraries, 100% of respondents felt that corrections professionals need more information, and 81% felt that library professionals need more information. Most also felt that Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants can help in meeting the costs of implementation.

Factors seen as problematic in implementing electronic resources in prison libraries were: prison management (86%), security (81%), equipment abuse (57%), space (48%), and cost (33%). Also cited as problematic in the open-ended responses were factors such as training, disapproval by the public and by ODRC Central Office, fear of anything considered "pro-inmate", and technical problems. One respondent states "prison management - the single most decisive problem; in this system, standard library procedures are difficult to implement. Automation and information technologies [are] almost impossible to integrate into daily operations. I could dramatically increase service, reduce costs, and integrate into a local network if I was allowed."

Factors seen as benefits to implementation were that electronic resources: can replace expensive print formats which can be damaged and need to be replaced due to theft (80%); can provide access to more information sources for staff and inmates (80%); can save construction costs by minimizing the need for more storage space (57%); and, can save the librarian's time spent on labor intensive tasks (38%).

CONCLUSIONS

The current status of electronic resources, and specifically the kind of electronic resources currently in use in Ohio prison libraries, such as OPACs, CD-ROMs, and modems, has been described. Of those who have electronic resources, an attempt has been made to determine possible benefits to the inmates and to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

Potential benefits include enhanced cooperative networks, more effective interlibrary loan services, saving construction costs and physical space, and wider access to information sources.

It could be helpful for future planning if materials and equipment could be coordinated and purchased at the state level, as this could provide consistency in OPAC software and hardware among the libraries, enhancing the possibility of a statewide network of prison libraries. In addition, this could save costs for the ODRC through centralized purchasing. The benefit of centralized purchasing was also suggested by Mason (1996, p. 32).

Interlibrary loan services can be improved and increased by being able to access other library catalogs and through the use of email for processing requests.

Lack of physical space seems to be a recurrent theme regarding all aspects of library services in prisons. Current technology can alleviate this problem, and do it cost effectively through the

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use of electronic resources.

Problems regarding implementation have been described along with some of the environmental factors influencing their implementation. This survey indicates that prison administration, and library professionals to a lesser degree, need to become more informed regarding electronic resources and their benefits. There seems to be a view frequently held by prison administration and by the public, that electronic resources will jeopardize the security of the institutions. As evidenced in this survey, most of the prison libraries in Ohio institutions have a work space that can be locked. Developing proposals and specific policies regarding the use of modems (external modems used by the librarian only, and locked when not in use) can reasonably address the security issue.

The current use of OPACs and CD-ROM technology in some Ohio institutions is a promising first step. Increased levels of awareness that equipment such as CD-ROM workstations do not enable inmates to "dial out" and access the Internet, will help to allay fears that hinder the implementation of electronic resources in prison libraries.

The LSTA Advisory Council has decided that the direction of the new LSTA grants program should be, among other things, to "encourage statewide resource sharing (interlibrary loan and delivery), encourage automation of non-automated libraries, and support services to underserved populations" (*The State Library of Ohio News*, 1997). Prison libraries should fit within these parameters and library services could be improved.

Suggestions for further research include perceptions regarding the use of electronic resources in prison libraries from the perspective of prison management, the relationship between corrections professionals and library professionals, and the status of electronic resources in

other states.

A proactive role on the part of prison librarians is essential in effecting change. They can work cooperatively with the State Library consultant and with prison management to increase the awareness level of benefits to implementation, and assist in developing a strategic plan for the future. Although this may appear to be a daunting task, it can be an effective means of moving toward improving information resources in prison libraries.

APPENDIX A

School of Library and Information Science
Columbus Program
(614) 292-7746

Kent STATE UNIVERSITY

Re: Electronic Resources in Ohio Prison Libraries

June 5, 1997

Dear Library Professional,

Prison librarians are always trying to find ways to improve library services in the unique environment of corrections. With the implementation of OHIOLINK and recently, OPLIN, electronic resources are quickly becoming a standard format in other kinds of libraries. Corrections and library professionals need to consider how electronic resources can be implemented in prison libraries. Traditionally, libraries have had the role of providing equitable access for those who might not otherwise have access, and this role continues today in implementing access to electronic resources; it is a different format from print, but the mission is the same. Granted, there are special issues to be dealt with in applying this mission to prison libraries.

As a graduate student in the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science, I am conducting a survey on electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries for the purpose of describing current status and the special issues regarding their implementation. **Your support is important** in providing library and corrections professionals with data to make informed decisions in this increasingly important facet of information resources.

Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed as you do not need to sign your name nor list the name of your institution on the questionnaire; only the researcher has access to the returned questionnaires. Return envelopes will be discarded upon receipt. There is **no penalty** of any kind should you choose not to participate in this study or if you would withdraw from participation at any time. There are **no apparent risks** from participation in this study since your responses are being requested anonymously. While you cooperation is essential to the success of this study, it is, of course, voluntary.

If you have any further questions regarding the questionnaire, the study itself, or the results of the study, please contact me at (419) 221-2308, or my research advisor, Dr. Mary Machin , at KSU's Columbus Program Office (614) 292-7746. If you have any further questions regarding research at Kent State University you may contact Dr. M. Thomas Jones, Vice Provost and Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, at KSU's main campus, at (216) 672-2851.

Sincerely,

VirginiaLaPoint
Graduate Student

P.S. The questionnaire should take less than ten minutes of your time. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. **Please return by June 19, 1997.** A stamped, self-addressed return envelope is included for your convenience.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

124 Mount Ha[illegible] 1050 Carmack Road
Columbus OH 43210

APPENDIX B

Electronic Resources in Ohio Prison Libraries
Survey questionnaire

1. This institution was built to house_____ (Number of inmates) It currently houses_____ (Number of inmates)

2. Does the library have a work space that can be locked?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Does the library currently have an OPAC (Online public access catalog)?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
(If no. go to question #4)
With a circulation module?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
With a cataloging module?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
With acquisitions control?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
With serials control?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, what software are you using (check one) ☐ DataTrek Version_____
☐ GLAS Version_____
☐ Other (please list)_____

Are inmates permitted to use the OPAC?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Do you still have a card catalog available for use by inmates patrons?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Does your library have any CD-ROM workstations?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
(If no. go to question #6)
What kinds of CD-ROMs do you have? (check all that apply)
☐ Encyclopedias
☐ Games
☐ Legal database
☐ Word processing programs
☐ Abstracts or full text database of magazine articles
☐ Books in Print
☐ College information
☐ Dictionaries
☐ Educational software

Are inmates permitted to use CD-ROM work stations?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

CD-ROMs in this library are used (check all that apply)
☐ For reference
☐ For legal work
☐ To support institution education programs
☐ To gain re-entry skills
☐ Self-directed learning
☐ To get information for ILL
☐ To play games
☐ For word processing

Do your PCs have printers attached for inmate use?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

What advantages have there been to CD-ROMs (check all that apply)

- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Less storage space required than print format
- ☐ Incur less damage than other formats
- ☐ Other (please describe)_____

_____

What disadvantages have there been to CD-ROMs (check all that apply)

- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Incurred damage to hardware and software
- ☐ Other (Please describe)_____

_____

6. Do you have a modem in your library?..... ☐ External ☐ Internal ☐ None
   (If no, go to question # 7)

   How do you address security issues? (Check all that apply)

   - ☐ Locked when not in use
   - ☐ Used only when inmates are not in the library
   - ☐ At a secure location outside the library, away from inmates

   This modem is used for: (check all that apply)

   - ☐ Sending ILL requests
   - ☐ Researching employee staff reference questions
   - ☐ Researching inmate reference questions
   - ☐ Accessing other library catalogs
   - ☐ Other (please describe)_____

   _____

7. Do you think it would be beneficial if the librarian had internet access? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Is your library part of a cooperative library network?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

   Which one?_____

9. How many Interlibrary Loan requests do you process per month?_____

   What methods do you use to process requests? (Check all that apply)

   - ☐ Paper method; postal mail
   - ☐ Fax
   - ☐ E-mail

10. Regarding your magazine and newspaper collection:
Does your library keep back issues?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No
If not , why not?..... ☐ No storage space
☐ Other (please describe)_____

_____

Does your library have any other source for magazine articles? (such as Infotrac, Periodical abstracts or full text databases on CD-ROM, etc.) Please list.

_____

11. Do you ever have difficulty finding answers to reference questions due to lack of resources in the current collection?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Do employee staff members use the library?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Do you think that security issues can be addressed in a way that maintains security, and still allow for the use of electronic resources in prison libraries?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Do you think that corrections professionals need more information regarding the benefits of using electronic resources in prison libraries? ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. Do you think that library professionals need more information regarding the benefits of using electronic resources in prison libraries?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Do you think that the new Library Services and Technology Act grants can help in meeting the costs of implementation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

17. What do you see as problematic in implementing electronic resources ? (check all that apply)

☐ Security
☐ Prison management
☐ Costs of implementation
☐ Inmate abuse of equipment
☐ Space for equipment
☐ Other (please describe)_____

_____

18. The use of electronic resources in this library would : (check all that apply)

- ☐ Save construction costs by minimizing need for storage space
- ☐ Save the librarian's time spent on labor intensive tasks
- ☐ Provide access to more information sources for staff and inmates
- ☐ Save costs by replacing expensive print formats which can be damaged and need to be replaced due to theft.

Please place in self addressed stamped envelope and **mail by June 19, 1997**, and **thank you**!

APPENDIX C

TABLE 1 Institution capacity N = 20

Code	Q1 Institution built to house:	Q1 Institution currently houses:	Q1 % capacity:
A	700	1400	200%
B	970	2200	227%
C	500	480	96%
D	1200	2300	192%
E	1165	1732	149%
F	1500	2300	153%
G	500	1000	200%
H*	-	-	-
I	250	440	176%
J	1200	2040	170%
K	1500	2100	140%
L	165	140	85%
M	900	1800	200%
N	1452	2200	152%
O	350	330	94%
P	350	680	194%
Q	750	2200	293%
R	600	1300	217%
S	1500	2600	173%
T	1600	2050	128%
U	1500	2300	153%
V**	-	-	-

* Respondent did not return questionnaire, but sent a written statement that they have no electronic resources of any kind. This response was excluded from statistics.

** Respondent did not answer the question about institution capacity.

Institution capacity based on N = 20

Mean = 170%

Range = 85% to 293%

Mode = 173%

TABLE 2 OPACs

	OPACs	N = 21	Yes	%	No	%
Q3	Does the library currently have an OPAC?		12	57%	9	43%
	circulation module ?		12	57%	9	43%
	cataloging module ?		12	57%	9	43%
	acquisitions module ?		2	10%	19	90%
	serials module ?		3	14%	18	86%
Q4	Does the library still have a card catalog?		*9	44%	**12	56%

* 2 of these libraries have an OPAC and a card catalog.
** 2 of these libraries have neither an OPAC or a card catalog.

	Respondents who have OPACs	N = 12	Yes	%
Q3	What software does the library use?			
	Data Trek		10	82%
	Manager		1	9%
	Follett		1	9%
	Are inmates permitted to use the OPAC?		12	100%

TABLE 3 CD-ROMs

CD-ROMs N = 21	Yes	%	No	%
Q5 Does your library have CD-ROM workstations?	11	52%	*10	48%

Respondents who have CD-ROMs: N = 11	Yes	%
Q5 Are inmates permitted to use CD-ROM workstations?	10	91%
Do your PCs have printers attached for inmate use? *one has printer, but not for inmate use	*6	55%
What kinds of CD-ROMs do you have?		
Encyclopedias	9	80%
Dictionaries	6	60%
Educational software	5	50%
Word processing programs	3	30%
Abstracts or full-text database of magazine articles	3	30%
Games	2	20%
Books in Print	2	20%
College information	2	20%
Legal databases	0	0%
CD-ROMS in this library are used :		
For reference	10	90%
To support institution education programs	6	60%
To get information for interlibrary loan	3	30%
For self directed learning	2	20%
To gain re-entry skills	1	10%
For word processing	1	10%
To play games	1	10%
For legal work	0	0%
What advantages have there been to CD-ROMs?		
Less storage space required than print format	8	70%
Incur less damage than other formats	7	60%
Cost	5	40%
What disadvantages have there been to CD-ROMs?		
Incurred damage to hardware or software	4	30%
Cost	0	0%

TABLE 4 Modems and Internet access

Modems and Internet access N = 21	Yes	%	No	%
Q6 Do you have a modem in your library?	1	5%	20	95%
Q7 Do you think it would be beneficial if the librarian had Internet access?	18	86%	3	14%
Q2 Does your library have a workspace that can be locked?	18	86%	3	14%
Q8 Is your library part of a cooperative library network?	7	33%	14	67%

TABLE 5 Cooperative Networks and interlibrary loan activity

	Cooperative networks and interlibrary loan N = 21	Yes	%	No	%
Q8	Is your library part of cooperative library network ?	7	33%	14	67%
Q6	Do you have a modem in your library?	1	5%	20	95%
Q2	Does the library have a work space that can be locked?	18	86%	3	14%

	ILL processing N = 21	Yes	%
Q9	What methods do you use to process ILL requests?		
	Paper method	17	81%
	Fax	5	24%
	e-mail	1	5%

Q9 How many ILL requests do you process per month? N = 21
0
0
3
4
5
5
10
15
15
20
20
20
20
25
30
65
70
150
200
550
1000

ILL requests processed per month: Mean = 106 Range = 0 to 1000 Mode = 20

TABLE 6 Periodicals

Periodicals:	N = 21	Yes	%	No	%
Q10	Regarding your magazine and newspaper collection:				
	Does your library keep back issues?	5	24%	16	76%
	Does your library have any other source for back issues?	4	19%	17	81%

Reasons for not keeping back issues:	N = 16	Yes	%
Q10	No storage space	13	67%
	Pilferage	3	14%
	Back issues go to special populations	*4	19%
	No interest in keeping them	1	5%

* Back issues go to special populations on the compound, such as segregation, residential treatment units, literacy units, or cadre.

TABLE 7 Perceptions about electronic resources in Ohio prison libraries

	Perceptions about electronic resources N = 21	Yes	%	No	%
Q11	Do you ever have difficulty answering reference questions due to lack of resources in the current collection?	17	81%	4	19%
Q12	Do employee staff members use the library? *One did not respond to the question	17	81%	3	14%
Q13	Do you think that security issues can be addressed in a way that maintains security, and still allow for the use of electronic resources in prison libraries?	20	95%	1	5%
Q14	Do you think that corrections professionals need more information regarding the benefits of using electronic resources in prison libraries?	21	100%	0	0%
Q15	Do you think that library professionals need more information regarding the benefits of using electronic resources in prison libraries?	17	81%	4	19%
Q16	Do you think that the new Library Services and Technology Act grants can help in meeting the costs of implementation? * One answered "unknown	*17	81%	3	14%

	Problems and benefits N = 21	Yes	%
Q17	What do you see as problematic in implementing electronic resources?		
	Prison management	18	86%
	Security	17	81%
	Equipment abuse	12	57%
	Space	10	48%
	Cost	7	33%
Q18	The use of electronic resources in this library would:		
	Save costs by replacing expensive print formats which can be damaged and need to be replaced due to theft.	15	80%
	Provide access to more information sources for staff & inmates.	15	80%
	Save construction cost by minimizing need for storage space.	12	57%
	Save the librarian's time spent on labor intensive tasks.	8	38%

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